Creativity, Activity and Service!

CAS HANDBOOK – 2021/2022

An important and enriching part of the IB diploma programme is CAS, which stands for Creativity, Activity and Service. The CAS programme offers great opportunities for engaging in new experiences and developing as a person, both individually as well as collectively.

Here is a quote from an IB graduate:

"CAS is an integral part of the IB Diploma Programme and, has been an important part of my life during the past two years. The IB CAS programme makes students aware of their strengths and areas for improvement. Moreover, though, undertaking new challenges and working collaboratively with others, I have gained academic and physical zeal. Additionally, through the past 2 years, I have constantly been engaging with issues of local, national, and global importance. Ultimately, the CAS programme has enabled me to develop new skills and set new goals for myself, academically and physically." Erik Kasuli Christensen IB graduate

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Main facts about CAS:

- The CAS programme consists of three strands – creativity, activity, and service

- **Creativity** – exploring and extending ideas leading to an original or interpretive product or performance.

- **Activity** – physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle.

- **Service** – collaborative and reciprocal engagement with the community in response to an authentic need.

- Each IB student must complete the CAS requirements over an **18-month period**. Therefore, CAS must be completed both in the first as well as the second year of the IB programme.

- CAS students must be involved in **at least one CAS project** during their CAS programme. A CAS project is a series of collaborative CAS experiences over the course of a least 1 month (see page 14).

- All CAS students are expected to maintain and complete a **CAS portfolio in ManageBac** as evidence of their engagement with CAS. The CAS portfolio is a collection of evidence that showcases CAS experiences and for student reflections.

- The CAS portfolio is electronically administrated in ManageBac.

- There are seven CAS learning outcomes (see page 6).

- Students use the **CAS stages** (investigation, preparation, action, reflection, and demonstration) as a framework for CAS experiences and the CAS project (see page 14).

- **CAS Adviser** - refers to teachers whose role is to provide ongoing support and advice to individual or groups of CAS students in relation to their CAS programme.

- **CAS Supervisor** - The CAS supervisor assists, offers guidance, and oversees the students' CAS experiences when needed. A supervisor may not be necessary if a student is able to undertake a CAS experience without assistance or supervision.

- **CAS Coordinator** – The person who is given overall responsibility for establishing and overseeing the school's CAS programme.

- There are three formal documented interviews students must have with their CAS adviser. The first interview is at the beginning of the CAS programme, the second at the end of the first year, and the third interview is at the end of the CAS programme.

Subject groups of the IB Diploma programme in relation to CAS

Each subject group of the Diploma Programme can contribute towards CAS. The examples below are suggestions only; teachers and students can create their own authentic connections where possible.

Group 1 students could engage in creative writing, produce audiobooks for the blind or write a movie and produce it.

Group 2 students could provide language lessons to those in need, develop language guides using technology or raise awareness of the culture of the language being studied through a website or other forms of communication.

Group 3 students could record the oral histories of people living in elderly residential facilities and create family memoirs, create a social enterprise addressing a community need or collaborate on a community garden.

Group 4 students could form an astronomy club for younger students, help maintain a nature reserve or promote physical participation in "walk to school" groups.

Group 5 students could teach younger children to overcome mathematical challenges, maintain financial accounts for a local charity or plan a mathematics scavenger hunt at school to highlight the importance of mathematics in everyday life.

Group 6 students could take dance lessons that lead to a theatrical performance, participate in a community art exhibition or community initiatives (such as performances or photo exhibits) for hospitals or aged-care facilities.

Responsibility of the CAS student

CAS students are expected to:

- approach CAS with a proactive attitude

- develop a clear understanding of CAS expectations and the purpose of CAS

- explore personal values, attitudes, and attributes with reference to the IB learner profile and the IB mission statement

- determine personal goals

- discuss plans for CAS experiences with the CAS coordinator and/or CAS adviser

- understand and apply the CAS stages where appropriate

- take part in a variety of experiences, some of which are self-initiated, and at least one CAS project

- become more aware of personal interests, skills and talents and observe how these evolve throughout the CAS programme

- maintain a CAS portfolio and keep records of CAS experiences including evidence of achievement of the seven CAS learning outcomes

- understand the reflection process and identify suitable opportunities to reflect on CAS experiences

- demonstrate accomplishments within their CAS programme

- communicate with the CAS coordinator/adviser and/or CAS supervisor in formal and informal meetings

- ensure a suitable balance between creativity, activity, and service in their CAS programme

- behave appropriately and ethically in their choices and behaviours.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Some learning outcomes may be achieved many times, while others may be achieved less frequently. Not all CAS experiences lead to a CAS learning outcome. Students provide the school with evidence in their CAS portfolio of having achieved each learning outcome at least once through their CAS programme. There are seven CAS learning outcomes.

LO 1	Identify own strengths and develop areas for growth
Descriptor	Students can see themselves as individuals with various abilities and skills, of which some are more developed than others.
LO 2	Demonstrate that challenges have been undertaken, developing new skills in the process
Descriptor	A new challenge may be an unfamiliar experience or an extension of an existing one. The newly acquired or developed skills may be shown through experiences that the student has not previously undertaken or through increased expertise in an established area.
LO 3	Demonstrate how to initiate and plan a CAS experience
Descriptor	Students can articulate the stages from conceiving an idea to executing a plan for a CAS experience or series of CAS experiences. This may be accomplished in collaboration with other participants. Students may show their knowledge and awareness by building on a previous experience, or by launching a new idea or process.
LO 4	Show commitment to and perseverance in CAS experiences
Descriptor	Students demonstrate regular involvement and active engagement in CAS.
LO 5	Demonstrate the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively
Descriptor	Students can identify, demonstrate and critically discuss the benefits and challenges of collaboration gained through CAS experiences.
LO 6	Demonstrate engagement with issues of global significance
Descriptor	Students can identify and demonstrate their understanding of global issues, make responsible decisions, and take appropriate action in response to the issue either locally, nationally, or internationally.
LO 7	Recognize and consider the ethics of choices and actions
Descriptor	Students show awareness of the consequences of choices and actions in planning and carrying out CAS experiences.

Table 1: The seven learning outcomes

CAS strands

Creativity

Creativity in CAS provides students with the opportunity to explore their own sense of original thinking and expression. Creativity will come from the student's talents, interests, passions, emotional responses, and imagination; the form of expression is limitless. This may include visual and performing arts, digital design, writing, film, culinary arts, crafts, and composition. Students are encouraged to engage in creative endeavours that move them beyond the familiar, broadening their scope from conventional to unconventional thinking.

There are many approaches to creativity, such as:

- *Ongoing creativity*: A student may already be engaged in creativity as part of a school group or club, or through some other form of sustained creativity. Students may continue in this as part of their creativity; however, students could also be encouraged to further extend and develop their participation, if appropriate.
- *School-based creativity*: Students are encouraged to participate in meaningful creativity and to explore their own sense of original thinking and expression. In school, there may well be appropriate creativity opportunities in which the students can engage. These creativity experiences could be part of the school's service CAS projects, a school club, timetabled creativity sessions, or other opportunities.
- *Community-based creativity*: Participating in creativity within the local community advances student awareness and understanding of interpersonal relationships with others, particularly if the creativity experience involves the local community. Creativity experiences best occur with a regularity that builds and sustains relationships while allowing the growth of students' talents, interests, passions, emotional responses, and imagination. For example, students could be encouraged to join a community-based theatre group, contribute towards a community art gallery, create a sculpture for the community park, take cooking classes, or other opportunities.
- *Individual creativity*: Students may decide that they wish to engage in solitary creativity experiences such as composing music, developing a website, writing a compilation of short fiction stories, designing furniture, creating arts and crafts, or painting a series of portraits. Such creativity experiences are of most benefit when they take place over an extended duration of time. Students can be encouraged to set personal goals and work towards these in a sustained manner. Risk assessment of such solitary creativity experiences should be conducted with the student beforehand if applicable.

Activity

The aim of the "Activity" strand is to promote lifelong healthy habits related to physical well-being. Pursuits may include individual and team sports, aerobic exercise, dance, outdoor recreation, fitness training, and any other form of physical exertion that purposefully contributes to a healthy lifestyle. Students are encouraged to participate at an appropriate level and on a regular basis to provide a genuine challenge and benefit.

There are many approaches to activity, such as:

- *Ongoing activity*: A student may already be engaged in activity as part of a school team or club, or through some other form of sustained physical exercise. Students may continue in this as part of their activity; however, they should set personal goals in keeping with the principles of CAS. Students can also be encouraged to further extend and develop their participation if appropriate.
- *School-based activity*: Students are encouraged to participate in meaningful activity that benefits their physical well-being. In school there may well be appropriate activity opportunities in which the student can engage. These activity experiences could, for example, be part of the school curriculums, a school sports club, or timetabled sports sessions. Students may elect to initiate a school-based activity such as basketball or tennis and engage other CAS students or any student within the school.
- *Community-based activity*: Participating in activity within the local community advances student awareness and understanding of interpersonal relationships, particularly if the activity experience involves members of the local community. However, single events of activity can lack depth and meaning. When possible, activity experiences best occur with a regularity that builds and sustains relationships while allowing the growth of physical well-being of the students. For example, rather than a single activity experience at a community-based fun run, students could be encouraged to join a community-based running club, a dance class, an aerobics class or an out-of-school sports group.
- *Individual activity*: Students may decide that they wish to engage in solitary activity experiences such as, for example, attending a gym, bicycling, roller-skating, swimming, or strength conditioning. Such activity experiences are of most benefit when they take place over an extended duration of time.

Students can be encouraged to set personal goals and work towards these in a sustained and correctly applied manner. Risk assessment of such solitary activity experiences should be conducted with the student beforehand if applicable.

Service

The aim of the "Service" strand is for students to understand their capacity to make a meaningful contribution to their community and society. Through service, students develop and apply personal and social skills in real-life situations involving decision-making, problem-solving, initiative, responsibility, and accountability for their actions.

There are many approaches to service, such as:

- *Ongoing service*: When investigating a need that leads to a plan of action implemented over time, students develop perseverance and commitment.
- *School-based service*: While students are encouraged to participate in meaningful service that benefits the community outside school, there may well be appropriate service opportunities within the school setting. In all cases an authentic need must be verified that will be met through student action.
- *Community-based service*: Participating in service within the local community advances student awareness and understanding of social issues and solutions. When possible, interactions involving people in a service context best occur with a regularity that builds and sustains relationships for the mutual benefit of all. For example, rather than a single service experience at a retirement facility, students can decide to establish regular visits when they realize their efforts are valued and have reciprocal impact.
- *Immediate need service*: In response to a disaster, students often want to move towards immediate action. Typically, they quickly attempt to assess the need and devise a planned response. Later, the students can be reminded and encouraged to further investigate the issue to better understand underlying causes. With increased knowledge, students may commit to ongoing assistance, e.g., joining prevention or community resilience initiatives regarding an environmental issue.
- *Fundraising*: The preferred approach is for students to initially develop their understanding of the organization they choose to support, and the issues being addressed. Students can draw from their interests, skills, and talents to plan the method and manner of fundraising. Ideally, students directly communicate with the organization and establish accountability for funds raised. Sharing the rationale for the fundraising educates others and advocates the chosen cause.
- *International service*: Students are encouraged to participate locally in service before considering service opportunities outside their country. When participating in international service, students must understand the background and the circumstances of an identified and authenticated need to support their involvement. When direct communication with an overseas community is not possible, students could cooperate with an outside agency to provide an appropriate service. Students do benefit from serving in an international context when able to make clear links to parallel issues in their local environs and they understand the consequences of their service
- *Volunteerism*: Students often volunteer in service experiences organized by other students, the school, or an external group. In such cases, students benefit from prior knowledge of the context and the service need. Being informed and prepared increases the likelihood that the students' contribution will have personal meaning and value.

CAS experiences

A **CAS experience** is a specific event in which the student engages with one or more of the three CAS strands.
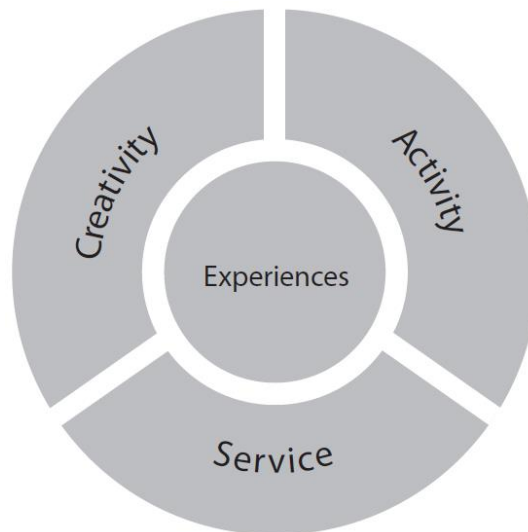
Figure 1: CAS experiences

A CAS experience can be a single event or may be an extended series of events.

A CAS project is a collaborative series of sequential CAS experiences lasting at least one month (see page 14).
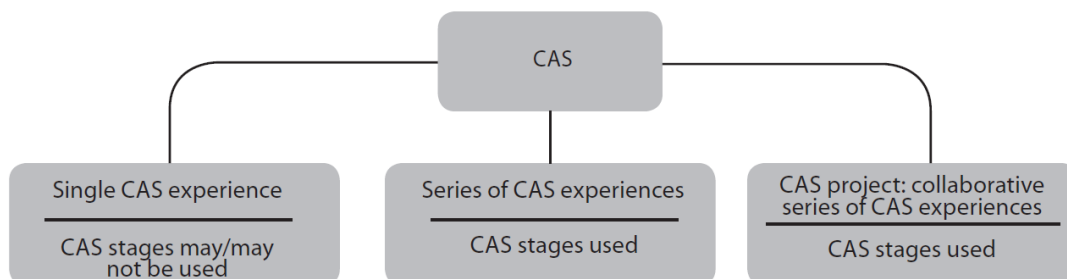
Figure 2: CAS experiences and stages

Typically, a student's CAS programme combines planned/unplanned singular and ongoing experiences. All are valuable and may lead to personal development. However, a meaningful CAS programme must be more than unplanned/singular experiences. A series of planned CAS experiences are recommended for a more engaging CAS programme.

CAS experiences may incorporate one or more of the CAS strands. For example:
- Going for a mountain hike could be a singular experience within the "Activity" strand.
- A student plans several visits to a nursing home resulting in a series of CAS experiences within the "Service" strand.
- A group of students plan and stage a basketball tournament for the local community, resulting in a series of CAS experiences involving the strands of "Activity" and "Service".
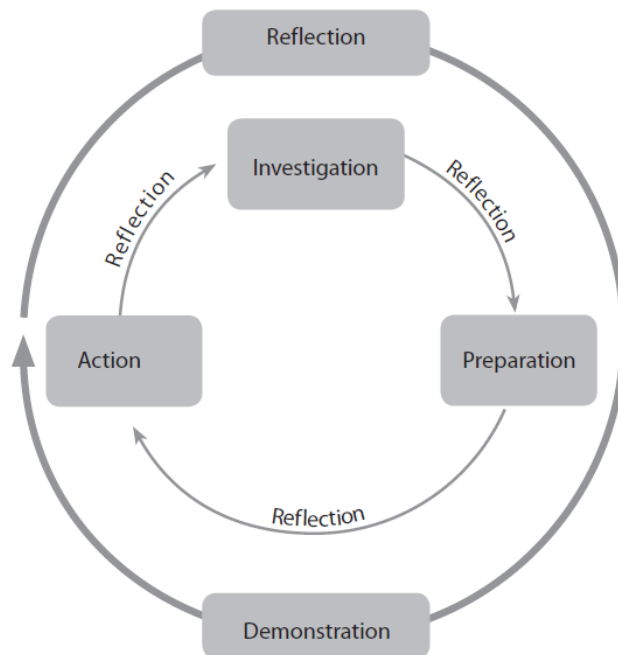
CAS stages

Figure 3: The five CAS stages

There are two parts as noted in the diagram. **The centre** represents the process with four key parts: **investigation***,* **preparation**, **action**, and **reflection** (occurring intermittently in response to significant experiences). The outer circle has two parts and guides students in summarizing their experience: **reflection** and **demonstration***.*

The five CAS stages are as follows.
1. **Investigation:** Students identify their interests, skills, and talents to be used in considering opportunities for CAS experiences, as well as areas for personal growth and development. Students investigate what they want to do and determine the purpose for their CAS experience. In the case of service, students identify a need they want to address.
2. **Preparation:** Students clarify roles and responsibilities, develop a plan of actions to be taken, identify specified resources and timelines, and acquire any skills as needed to engage in the CAS experience.
3. **Action:** Students implement their idea or plan. This often requires decision-making and problem solving. Students may work individually, with partners, or in groups.
4. **Reflection:** Students describe what happened, express feelings, generate ideas, and raise questions. Reflection can occur at any time during CAS to further understanding, to assist with revising plans, to learn from the experience, and to make explicit connections between their growth, accomplishments, and the learning outcomes for personal awareness. Reflection may lead to new action.
5. **Demonstration:** Students make explicit what and how they learned and what they have accomplished, for example, by sharing their CAS experience through their CAS portfolio or with others in an informal or formal manner. Through demonstration and communication, students solidify their understanding and evoke response from others.

Reflection

Reflection is central to building a deep and rich experience in CAS.

The overarching intention of reflection in CAS includes the opportunity to:
- deepen learning
- consider relevance of experience
- explore personal and group values
- recognize the application of knowledge, skills, and attributes
- identify strengths and areas for development
- gain a greater understanding of self and others
- place experience in a larger context
- generate relevant ideas and questions
- consider improvements in individual and collective choices and actions
- transfer prior learning to new situations
- generate and receive constructive feedback
- develop the ongoing habit of thoughtful, reflective practice.

Elements of reflection

Reflection is a dynamic means for self-knowing, learning and decision-making. Four elements assist in the CAS reflective process. The first two elements form the foundation of reflection.
- Describing what happened: Students retell their memorable moments, identifying what was important or influential, what went well or was difficult, obstacles and successes.
- Expressing feelings: Students articulate emotional responses to their experiences.

The following two elements add greater depth and expand perspectives.
- Generating ideas: Rethinking or re-examining choices and actions increases awareness about self and situations.
- Asking questions: Questions about people, processes, or issues prompt further thinking and ongoing inquiry.

Time for reflection
- Students choose significant moments as the basis for reflection, for example when:
  - a moment of discovery is happening
  - a skill is mastered
  - a challenge is confronted
  - emotions are provoked
  - achievement deserves celebration

- Students reflect during or at the end of a CAS experience or series of CAS experiences, to identify important moments, discuss a possible learning outcome, recognize personal growth and achievements, and plan for their next CAS experience.
- Students engage in group reflection with their peers to discover shared insights.
- Students reflect at the beginning, during, and at the end of a series of CAS experiences. This enables students to deliberate on such elements as planning, opportunities, expectations, challenges, progress, and personal growth.

Forms of reflection

Reflection can appear in countless forms. CAS students should be able to identify forms of expression that have personal meaning and best enable them to explore their experiences. For example:

- A student might take photographs while hiking and use these to reflect in writing.
- Two students could compose a song describing how they helped children.
- A student might dramatize a poem to capture a feeling of creative endeavour.
- A student could produce a short video summarizing a CAS experience.
- A group of students create a poster highlighting aspects of a shared experience.

Reflection is:	Reflection is not:
• honest	• forced
• personal	• right or wrong
• done in many different ways	• good or bad
• sometimes difficult	• marked or graded
• sometimes easy	• difficult
• sometimes creative	• copying what someone else said
• building self-awareness	• predictable
• necessary for learning	• to be judged by others
• what I did, combined with how I felt	• only a summary of what happened
• surprising	• done to please someone else
• helpful for planning	• a waste of time
• done alone or with others	• only written
• about thoughts, feelings, and ideas	• only discussion
• adding perspective.	• only led by teachers.

Table 2: What reflection is and what it is not.

CAS project

A CAS project is a collaborative, well-considered series of sequential CAS experiences, engaging students in one or more of the CAS strands of creativity, activity, and service. **CAS students must be involved in at least one CAS project during their CAS programme.**
A minimum of one month is recommended for a CAS Project, from planning to completion.
A CAS project can address any single strand of CAS or combine two or all three strands. The following examples are provided to help generate further ideas without limiting the scope and direction of a CAS project.

- Creativity: A student group plans, designs, and creates a mural.
- Activity: Students organize and participate in a sports team including training sessions and matches against other teams.
- Service: Students set up and conduct tutoring for people in need.
- Creativity and activity: Students choreograph a routine for their marching band.
- Service and activity: Students plan and participate in the planting and maintenance of a garden with members of the local community.
- Service and creativity: Students identify that children at a local school need backpacks and subsequently design and make the backpacks out of recycled materials.
- Creativity, activity, and service: Students rehearse and perform a dance production for a community retirement home.

A minimum of one month is recommended for a CAS project, from planning to completion. CAS projects of longer duration can provide even greater scope and opportunities for all participants and should be encouraged. Students should aim to undertake their CAS project locally and, if possible, engage in more than one CAS project over the duration of their CAS programme.

For a more elaborate explanation of the CAS programme please refer to the

CREATIVITY, SERVICE AND ACTIVITY GUIDE, 2017